

CLAIMS:

1. An MPEG-4 encoder in which the bitstream corresponding to the output encoded content to be sent by means of a transmission network is stored in the so-called .mp4 file format as media tracks and the transport mechanism is stored in said file by adding specific hint tracks, one per media track, said hint tracks being used to include, for the adaptation of said encoded content to the size of the transmission packets corresponding to a given type of network, a pre-segmentation information indicating how to fragment the MPEG-4 data entities (or Access Units) stored in the media tracks in order to match the size of said packets, said encoder being such that the fragmentation information, structuring the coded bitstream in entities that are now independent in order to recover some context even if a packet is lost, is stored during encoding in a fragment structure file which is independent of said .mp4 file.
2. A coded signal available at the output of an MPEG-4 encoder in the form of a bitstream to be sent by means of a transmission network and including on one side media data, stored in the so-called .mp4 file format, and on the other side a pre-segmentation information indicating how to fragment the MPEG-4 data entities (or Access Units) corresponding to said media data in order to match the size of the packets of said transmission network.
3. An MPEG-4 terminal, receiving a coded signal according to claim 2 and which is read according to a file structure having the following syntax:
- Loop on MPEG-4 Access Units until end-of-file, and, for each Access Unit:
 - Read the number of fragments N
 - Loop on fragments until N, and, for each fragment:
 - Read the fragment size (in bits)
 - End-of-loop on fragments
 - End-of-loop on Access Units.

4. An MPEG-4 terminal according to claim 3, in which a hinter program is provided for generating with the .mp4 file a new .mp4 file containing optimal hint tracks, said hinted file being then used by the terminal according to the concerned application.

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